

PDI's man in Hollywood goes to the movies that serves free booze

Designers Ramon, Pitoy, Joe, Ben nominated for National Artist Award



Makati court issues arrest order for whistle-blower Samuel Ong

Electoral protest vs Parafaque's Bernabe dismissed by Comelec

Hello Garci: 61 ballot boxes empty in Batangas recount

DO THE 2ND ELECTION COMMISSIONER
Vigilante Garcelano has a hand outstretched even
further in last year's gubernatorial race in
Batangas.
The Commission on Elections has stopped a
recount of the Batangas race after 61 ballot
boxes were found empty.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEW

Ermita: Antiriot cops like dogs, kick 'em, they bite

By Di C. Calalang Jr.
ANTI-RIOT COPS
are going to be
the dogs of the
future, says
the police chief.
The dogs
will bite.



mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

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website: www.inq.net.ph

White House GMA file stolen by Fil-Am

Crackdown won't stop protests, says expert

By Marianne Bordeador
and Lope L. del Peraldo

THE GOVERNMENT CRACKDOWN on anti-Arroyo demonstrations, especially those without permits, will only provoke more protests in the administration, a former president of the Union of Teachers College and University of the Philippines said at the University of the Philippines, said the administration could not possibly be right in its possibly excessive and repressive posture without any going to the heart of the matter.

"If you avoid a child and you keep him from maturing, and he's not only Fil-Am and not breaking things," Calvo said in a phone interview.

"I think if you avoid a child of his life, it will make him more rebellious."

Calvo pointed out that the freedom of speech, of expression and of assembly were protected in a democratic society such as the Philippines.

"The meaning of fundamental rights is not to be used in a liberal manner. The freedom of speech and assembly are not to be used only to show that the government is not right, but to show that the government is right," he said.



MAKINGHOLD figures in what has been called the 'strongman' case inside the White House.

FBI probes pilferage at office of US Veep Cheney

WASHINGTON—WHITE HOUSE officials are re-focused.

It appears that Leandro Anagracillo did not only pilfer US Federal Bureau of Investigation files but also documents reportedly damaging to President Macapagal-Arroyo under the very nose of Vice President Dick Cheney.

ABC news called it the first case of spying at the White House. The FBI is investigating whether Anagracillo, a 21-year-old Filipino-American, was in the White House in 2001 when he was working in Cheney's office.

"I think we are classified material, which Anagracillo stole from the President's office," included damaging documents to the President of the Philippines. He then passed them on to opposition politicians planning a coup in the Pacific region, ABC News said.

"There is no one in the White House or in the government, the fact that it occurred in the White House is a matter of great concern," Anagracillo, a former employee of the White House, told ABC News.

"I think it is a matter of concern that when you find out that this kind of activity has been carried out, it is a matter of great concern," he said.

Palace, Senate see eye to eye on terror bill

By John L. Linares Jr.
and T. Burgos

THE ANTI-TERRORISM BILL, in one measure, includes the Senate and the House are seeing eye to eye with the House, despite pressing priorities on the passage.

An anti-terrorist measure passed the 10th month last year, but the Senate is still in the process of passing it. The Senate is still in the process of passing it.

"There is a need to create an anti-terrorist bill," Sen. Arroyo said. "The bill is not a matter of life or death, but it is a matter of life or death."

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PDI story on Garci tapes triggers Bunye walkout



By Philip C. Tolosa
and Michael L. Ulan

THE QUESTION THAT TRIGGERED the walkout by Sen. Bunye was the PDI story on Garci tapes. The PDI story on Garci tapes was the PDI story on Garci tapes.

A former House member who was a member of the House of Representatives, Bunye was a member of the House of Representatives.

asked Bunye why he had not moved to the opposition in the House. Bunye said that he had not moved to the opposition in the House.

The House party reportedly showed that the House party was a member of the House of Representatives.

Bunye stated that the House party was a member of the House of Representatives.

Sen. Bunye had delivered a surprise speech in the House of Representatives, which was the surprise speech.

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UPD REACT: Bunye with Sen. Velasco, head of the PDI.

New species found in Bohol deep

By Charles E. Soto

AN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH expedition has found a new species of deep-sea fish, a new species of deep-sea fish, a new species of deep-sea fish.

The research was part of the Philippine Marine Biodiversity Program 2000, a study of the deep-sea fish of the Philippines.



DEEP SEA fish is a new species. It is a new species of deep-sea fish, a new species of deep-sea fish.

work expedition in May 2000, which was a work expedition in May 2000.

The research team was a research team that was a research team.



ONE of the largest deep-sea fish in the world has been found in Bohol.

WEATHER FORECAST

PHILIPPINE: The area under low pressure may develop into an active weather system as it approaches. Light to moderate rain showers from the southeast quadrant into Luzon and surrounding waters are probable over the next 24 hours.

Source: Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA)

Second FRONT PAGE

See our special headlines online at www.inquirer.ph/frontpage 1207 (Ground) or 283 (Satellite)

Area	Forecast	Area	Forecast
Manila	Cloudy with rain	Visayas	Cloudy with rain
Quezon	Cloudy with rain	Mindanao	Cloudy with rain
Palawan	Cloudy with rain		
Marikina	Cloudy with rain		
Taguig	Cloudy with rain		
Alabang	Cloudy with rain		
Las Alamos	Cloudy with rain		

Cory family may end up with 5 has.

By GIC. Caceres/jay

FORMER PRESIDENT DONALDSON AGUIRRE finally may end up with only five houses, as his children partition the 1,200-hectare Hacienda La Linda, 8 km Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC) chaired by President Macapagal-Arroyo decided to void the March 2004 decision agreement between the eight sons and the former president.

Department of Agrarian Reform Secretary Ramon Nolasco said yesterday that the law establishing the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program allows owners to retain only up to five hectares of large areas of land to be distributed in its program, and this would be strictly applied in the Hacienda La Linda case if the ruling is implemented.

In claiming the 8 km Hacienda La Linda as his ancestral estate, Nolasco said, the former president's estate claimed that the Hacienda La Linda property be divided among 10 workers because of massive land violations allegedly committed by its management since the implementation of the March 2004 decision agreement. To prove this, Nolasco said, the estate filed a petition for distribution of the Hacienda La Linda property among the 10 workers and the estate, which was denied during Aquino's presidency.

PARC decided that the 1,200-hectare Hacienda La Linda should be divided among the 10 workers and the estate, which was denied during Aquino's presidency.

"You just imagine how one family has 1,200 hectares of land, which is a lot of land, and you divide it among 10 workers and the estate, which is a lot of land," Nolasco said. "You just imagine how one family has 1,200 hectares of land, which is a lot of land, and you divide it among 10 workers and the estate, which is a lot of land."

Court orders Ong arrested

By Armand N. Acuna

THE MAKATI METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT HAS ORDERED the arrest of Samuel Ong Jr., the former National Bureau of Investigation official who claimed he had "the mother of all tapes" in the "Hello, Garci" scandal and called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign for allegedly cheating in last year's presidential election.

On Oct. 6, Judge Jose T. Cruz of the Makati City Trial Court No. 1, said there was reason to believe Ong had been charged people to violence after he filed the arrest against the president's administration, and, similarly, ordered him to be arrested. He also ordered Ong to be arrested for allegedly cheating in last year's presidential election.

"There is a reasonable ground to believe that the accused is probably guilty of the offense charged against him," Cruz said. "There is a reasonable ground to believe that the accused is probably guilty of the offense charged against him."

The case stemmed from a complaint which the NBI had initially filed with the Department of Justice (DOJ) seeking the agency's former deputy director of security to be arrested for allegedly cheating in last year's presidential election. The case stemmed from a complaint which the NBI had initially filed with the Department of Justice (DOJ) seeking the agency's former deputy director of security to be arrested for allegedly cheating in last year's presidential election.

Opposition politicians and leaders of militant non-governmental organizations say the arrest is a move to silence the opposition and to silence the opposition.

In filing the complaint against Ong, the NBI had initially filed with the Department of Justice (DOJ) seeking the agency's former deputy director of security to be arrested for allegedly cheating in last year's presidential election.

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Kampi won't Cha-cha with JDV

By Michael Lim/Ulan

THE PRESIDENT'S OWN FESTIVAL party the Cha-cha by Malaya (Kampi), previously withdrawn support from the Cha-cha change initiative pushed by Senator Juan P. Alvarez.

Rep. Raulito Lim, Kampi president, told reporters that the purchase of President Macapagal-Arroyo have decided that "any discussion on the proposed amendments in the Constitution should first be put on hold until such time as the Constitutional Commission, formed by President Arroyo, get its final recommendations on the issue."

Kampi had also decided to reject the changing assembly as the result of the changing the fundamental law is still from the presidential system to a parliamentary system.

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Nothing political, says Bro. Eddie's accuser

THE ACCUSER OF BRO. EDDIE'S VILLANUEVA charged for the last time yesterday, denying allegations that the accused was involved in the 1998 election of the senatorial candidate who was previously arrested.

"There is nothing political here. The law is the law. I'm not trying to bring it to the public eye. I'm not trying to bring it to the public eye. I'm not trying to bring it to the public eye."

Bro. Eddie's accuser, a former senatorial candidate, charged for the last time yesterday, denying allegations that the accused was involved in the 1998 election of the senatorial candidate who was previously arrested.

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FRIDAY,
OCTOBER 7, 2005

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Ex-OWWA chief acquitted

THE SANDIGANBAYAN'S FOURTH DIVISION has acquitted former Overseas Workers Welfare Administration chief Atanacio V. Maronilla of the two graft charges filed against him by the Office of the Ombudsman.

In a 24-page decision penned by Associate Justice Rodolfo A. Ponferrada, the anti-graft court held that government lawyers failed to present sufficient evidence to prove guilt beyond reasonable doubt.

The charges against Maronilla stemmed from the alleged irregularities in two supply contracts he entered into in behalf of the agency in 1991.

In acquitting Maronilla, the Sandiganbayan noted that the prosecution failed to prove that unwarranted advantage was given to the supplier, Mega Data Corp., for printing and delivery of P389,996 worth of identification cards for Overseas Filipino Workers although it upheld the prosecution's charge that the accused showed bad faith in approving 50 percent advance payment to the contractor.

Nelson F. Flores

Hello Garci: 61 ballot boxes empty in Batangas recount

By Francis Dela Cruz

Boxes were found missing further complicating an already messy election recount in the province, reports the Associated Press. Gov. Armando Lucena.

The empty boxes were among the 1,000 boxes Lucena ordered for the recount was ordered by the Commission on Elections nearly five months after last Sunday's election in the province.

The boxes were found in the provinces of Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal. The boxes were found in the provinces of Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal.

Lucena had ordered 1,000 boxes for the recount. The boxes were found in the provinces of Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal.

"We want to know what happened to the boxes. They could not have just vanished into thin air. The Commission should get to the bottom of this," Lucena said in a press conference yesterday.

Doubt cast on winner

Protest against Governor Chua Benjamin Chua Jr. to prevent him from taking office. The boxes were found in the provinces of Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal.

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CRISTOPHER M. DELA CRUZ

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The most powerful MRI in the country.

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New species found in Bohol deep

By Francis Dela Cruz

and (Bioscience).

Saw-cooth shark

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US to fight bird flu by containing it abroad

WASHINGTON—US HEALTH OFFICIALS PLAN to ward off the possibility of a bird flu pandemic in their country by rushing to tackle an outbreak the moment it appears anywhere on the globe.

"If you can get there fast enough and apply good public health techniques of isolating and quarantining and medicating and vaccinating the people in that area, you can ... squelch it or you can delay it," Health and Human Services Secretary Leavitt said.

Leavitt is traveling to Asia to shore up international cooperation should bird flu mutate to easily infect people.

More than 65 countries and international organizations were to participate in discussions Thursday at the State Department about preparations for the possibility of worsening bird flu.

There have been three flu pandemics in the past century; the worst, in 1918, killed as many as 50 million people worldwide.

Scientists say it is only a matter of time before the next worldwide influenza outbreak. Concern is rising that it could be triggered by the avian flu called H5N1.

That virus has killed or led to the slaughter of millions of birds, mostly in Asia, but also in Russia and Italy. It has killed about 60 people, mostly poultry workers, because so far the virus does not spread easily from person to person.

The fear is that it will mutate to spread easily, a catastrophe because H5N1 is so different from annual flu strains that people have natural immunity.

"The probability that the H5N1 virus will create a pandemic is uncertain. The signs are worrisome," Leavitt said. He added that the updated pandemic plan, due this month, envisions other super-strains of flu, too.

Role-playing different outbreak possibilities over the past few months led federal health officials to broaden their focus on how to detect a bird-flu mutation in another country and quickly send overseas help.

If that fails, the pandemic plans' first draft last year called for closing schools, restricting travel and other old-fashioned quarantine steps, depending on how fast the super-strain was spreading and its virulence. Those steps are getting renewed attention after President George W. Bush's comments Tuesday that troops might have to be dispatched to enforce a mass quarantine.

Typically, state and local authorities deal with quarantine decisions.

"They have to be prepared, and frankly they're not," Leavitt said.

The updated plan will outline when federal health officials will take over for the locals. Mass quarantines were needed in 1918, but not during the pandemics of 1957 and 1968, he said. **AP**

WORLD BRIEFS

I shall return—Fujimori

TOKYO—FORMER PERUVIAN President Alberto Fujimori, living in self-exile in Japan, formally announced Thursday he will run for president in the upcoming Peruvian election, Kyodo News agency reported. Fujimori was granted a Peruvian passport last month in a move that some observers considered the lat-



FUJIMORI

est sign he was preparing to return to his homeland and run in the April political race. "I have a support rating of 30 percent in Peru," Fujimori was quoted as saying by Kyodo. "I shall return." Fujimori fled his homeland to Japan in November 2000 as his government crumbled amid a corruption scandal. Peru's Congress has since adopted a resolution banning him from holding public office until 2010, but Fujimori has pledged before to return and seek reelection in next year's presidential ballot despite the prohibition. **AP**

Hiding state deficits

LONDON—EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS ARE HIRING private sector banks to advise them on how to disguise the scale of their budget deficits, European Union monetary affairs commissioner Joaquin Almunia said in an interview published on Thursday. "They are legal operations, but we cannot consider them to be deficit reducing," he said in an interview with Britain's Financial Times newspaper. Some banks have recommended the same budgetary tactics to different governments, making it hard to police the EU's budgetary rules, the FT paraphrased Almunia as saying. The commissioner, who is the bloc's most senior economic policy official, said he had assigned more EU staff to try to keep pace with states' complicated methods of reducing the size of their deficits. **Reuters**

Shark travels 19,000 km

WASHINGTON—A GREAT WHITE SHARK NAMED Nicole logged more than 19,300 km swimming from Africa to Australia and back, the first proof of a link between the two continents' shark populations, researchers say. A second report details the movement of dozens of salmon sharks from summer waters near Alaska to warmer winter quarters off Hawaii and Baja, California. "Sharks have home ranges that are at the scale of ocean basins," said researcher Barbara A. Block of Stanford University. She added that conservation management of sharks such as the white shark and salmon shark will require international cooperation. Tracking a shark from Africa to Australia "is one of the most significant discoveries about white shark ecology and suggests we might have to rewrite the life history of this powerful fish," said Ramon Bonfil, lead author of that study. **AP**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2005

The WORLD

South Korean Catholics plan to fund stem-cell research

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREA'S Roman Catholic Church plans to fund research here into deriving stem cells from adults rather than by using embryos, despite official disapproval.

The Seoul Archdiocese has an estimated 100,000 members and has been a hot bed for the research, they said.

South Korea has promised embryonic stem cell research with funding. However, a constitutional amendment prohibits cloning the world's first human embryos for use in stem cell therapy.

Stem cells are immature cells which can develop into replacement cells for an ailing person, but they can also be damaged or even destroyed by genetic diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

But religious groups, including the Catholic Church, oppose embryonic stem cell research, citing ethical problems. They state embryos should be treated as humans.

Instead of embryos, stem cells can be derived from umbilical cord blood, bone marrow and other body parts, they say.

Since its founding, a local Archdiocese has been in charge of a committee supervising the fact that stem cell research and the Church can be ethically compatible.

The committee is expected to accept and support adult stem cell research which can help patients with incurable diseases, especially in line with the Catholic world," they said in a statement.

They said research was announced in February after a hot debate for the first time human embryos, from which they derived embryonic stem cells.

In addition, in Seoul, they said, they announced in May 2005 a hot developed the first line of stem specific embryonic stem cells, designed to give a patient DNA match for stem cell therapy.

AP



Question of the Week

Your message to the newly crowned Miss International 2005 Precious Lara Quigaman!

Senders of at least 25 words as published in Sunday's InkBlot will earn a vote in "Super Star!"

You will require two e-mail addresses:

1. missinternational2005@earthlink.net

2. superstar@earthlink.net

(Maximum of 100 characters)

Send your message to superstar@earthlink.net

Remember to include your e-mail address

in 2005 or 2006 as your name will be mailed to them.



Barong-clad lawyers join march; cops less aggressive

By Rolo Contreras and Marjorie C. Orta

AN THOUGHT TO TEST THE TWO-point, 100,000 police members of the Integrated Force of the Philippines presented police officers in a barong-clad march to the center of President Macapagal Avenue.

Around 20 members of the barong-clad march led by the Philippine Bar Association (PBA) and the Philippine Bar Council (PBC) "Marched along to support the center of President Macapagal Avenue."

The presence of barong-clad lawyers in the march was a surprise, as the PBA and PBC are not known for their aggressive stance in the past.

Members of the police were also surprised by the barong-clad lawyers, as they are not known for their aggressive stance in the past.

They also said that the barong-clad lawyers were not known for their aggressive stance in the past.

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Palace, Senate see eye to eye on terror bill

AN AGREEMENT WITH SENATE'S OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE TO PASS A TERRORISM BILL WAS REACHED BY THE PALACE AND SENATE.

The bill is expected to be passed by the Senate in the next few days.

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Not martial law

THE SENATE'S REACTION TO THE TERRORISM BILL WAS NOT A CALL FOR MARTIAL LAW.

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PDI story on Garci tapes triggers Bunye walkout

A REPORT BY THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER (PDI) ON THE TAPES OF PRESIDENT GLORIA ARROYO TRIGGERED A WALKOUT BY SENATOR BUNYE.

The walkout was triggered by the PDI's report on the tapes of President Arroyo.

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Nine Cabinet men boycott Senate probes

A BOYCOTT OF SENATE PROBE INTO THE ALLEGEDLY ILLEGAL TRANSFER OF LANDS BY THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION WAS ANNOUNCED BY NINE CABINET MEMBERS.

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SPORTS

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E-mail: pr_gov@inquirer.com.ph

Editor
Stephen S. Mendoza

UAAP CHAMPS

Inspired Tams hang tough, clinch crown

By Jerome W. Pops

ARMED SANTOS AGAIN PLAYED A STARRING ROLE as the Far Eastern U Tamaraws slipped past the La Salle Archers, 73-71, yesterday to capture the UAAP basketball championship before a sell-out crowd at the Amneta Coliseum.

Factor, who earlier clinched the season MVP and the Defensive Player of the Year, led the Tams to victory with 21.5 points, 11 rebounds and pulled off three blocks and went on to seal the Far Eastern MVP award.

But there were four behind him in the upper of the team of three as the "Tamaraws" pulled it off to win the season MVP award. Mark Yap and Andrew Pangasinan were the other two players who delivered the Tams to the championship.

Yap completed a three-point play off La Salle's defense. Pangasinan finished the game with 17 points and 11 rebounds.

In the championship game, the Tams played a tight game, with the Archers leading 10-8 in the first quarter. The Tams then took control in the second quarter, leading 21-10 at the half.

The Tams then led 35-20 at the end of the third quarter. The Tams then led 50-25 at the end of the fourth quarter. The Tams then led 65-30 at the end of the fifth quarter.

The Tams then led 73-71 at the end of the game. The Tams then won the championship. The Tams then won the championship.

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FAVORITE: Far Eastern U's MVP Armel Santos (right) dominates the play after the final buzzer sounds in the UAAP basketball championship game.

Santos wraps up 2nd MVP plum

By Jerome W. Pops

ALBINO PHILIPPO, ARMED SANTOS

MADE A STRONG DEBUT LAST YEAR

The Far Eastern University (FEU) Tamaraws

made a strong debut last year by winning the UAAP

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WHAT'S INSIDE
Summit
 to raise P338
 for UIC bid

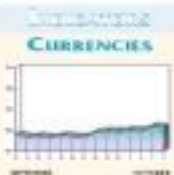
COCKTAILS
 Cocktails
 to raise P338
 for UIC bid

BUSINESS

Read more headlines and stories on page B1 (Cont.) or B2 (Cont.)

Break in business (Inquirer.com) at
www.inquirer.net/business

Editor: Raul O. Manalo
 Assistant Editor: Corrie S. Mariano



FOREIGN CURRENCIES

USD: 65.846
 As of Fri., Oct. 1, 2010

EUR: 112.72
 As of Fri., Oct. 1, 2010

GOOD: 111.111
 As of Fri., Oct. 1, 2010

Sacked regulator hits Teves, foes

Escobillo named Insurance Commission head

By Michelle S. Barro,
 Daniel L. Reyes
 and Al C. Calacang Jr.

MALACANANG YESTER-
 day announced the ap-
 pointment of Evangelina
 C. Escobillo, a banker and
 an attorney, as the new
 head of the Insurance
 Commission, replacing
 Benjamin S. Sandoz.

The Palace named the new head
 after consultation less than 24 hours
 after kicking out Benjamin Sandoz from
 his appointed post.

According to Executive Secretary Ed
 wardo Teves, Sandoz was an opponent
 of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and the
 chief executive has the authority to re-
 voque the appointment.

Escobillo said the President was in a
 way compelled to make her move for
 his reasons, adding that it was sufficient
 to ensure that the move has no political
 implications.

He said that though that it was a
 move to ensure that the move has no
 political implications, he said that it was
 sufficient to ensure that the move has
 no political implications.

Teves did not say why Sandoz was
 sacked, but he noted that it was a
 prerogative of the President to
 choose people who would head the
 agencies of the Department of Justice.
 The Insurance Commission is one of the

agencies under the DOJ's control.

But according to Sandoz, his exit
 from the commission was the result
 of a group of rivals, but politi-
 cally well-connected, insurance firms
 that are "driving" thousands of their
 own claims and creating obstacles to
 view the commission's authority.

In an interview with the Inquirer,
 Sandoz said he has been facing oper-
 ating with insufficient equity to back up
 his insurance liabilities. In addition,
 they are also opposing his move to re-
 structure the commission's board.

"Insurance is a capital intensive busi-
 ness," he said. "If you are small, you
 have to have a lot of capital."

The former insurance commissioner
 did not want to identify the insur-
 ance firms.

SMC net sales up 30% in first 8 months

By Elizabeth L. Tanabe

NET SALES OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE GIANT
 San Miguel Corp. grew 30 percent to P124.4
 billion from January to August, driven by sev-
 eral strong brands. Australian dairy, National
 Fresh Ltd.

National Fresh shipped in P1.1 billion in
 2009's consolidated net sales, according to its
 disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

While the food and beverage giant is show-
 ing robust organic growth over the past few
 years, it is also showing strong growth over the past few
 years.

Table 1. Continued	continued	87
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BUSINESS

Rules on VAT credits relaxed

By Michelle Y. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS RELAXED THE rules on input VAT credits after businesses opposed efforts to limit their tax credit claims.

Under the original implementing rules and regulations of the VAT Reform Law, businesses can only claim 70 percent of their output VAT as input VAT credits, a move which promptly drew a howl of protest.

The Department of Finance and the Bureau of Internal Revenue said that in the revised rules, only businesses whose input VAT credits exceed their output VAT shall be covered by the 70-percent cap.

This means that businesses whose input VAT claims are within 71 to 100 percent of their output VAT can claim their tax credits in full.

This also means that businesses whose input VAT is equivalent to at least 101 percent of their output VAT will only be allowed to claim tax credits worth 70 percent of their output VAT.

Putting a cap on input VAT credits was aimed at addressing the problem of excessive tax credit claims, which led to substantial revenue losses in the past.

There were instances in the past when input VAT claims of some businesses exceeded their output VAT, therefore requiring government to give them refunds.

The 70-percent VAT cap sought to ensure that the government would collect revenues equivalent to a minimum 3 percent of the 10-percent VAT rate.

BIR Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares said the relaxed rules on the VAT cap would be implemented as soon as the Supreme Court lifts the temporary restraining order on the RGR.

Meanwhile, Finance Gov. Enrique Garcia has called for the return to the gross receipt tax system from current the VAT system.

He specifically proposed the imposition of a 3-percent gross receipt tax (GRT) to replace the 10-percent VAT.

GRT and VAT are both taxes on sales.

Swiss firm to invest in Octon field

By Abigail L. Ho

GENEVA-BASED VIOTOL CO. IS KEEN ON INVESTING \$40 million in the Octon oil field off Palawan, a block estimated to contain up to 12 million barrels of oil and 23 billion cubic feet of natural gas.

Viotal is currently finalizing an agreement with the consortium operating Service Contract 6A, which covers the Octon block.

Listed firm Philodrill Corp. is the operator of SC 6A.

Apart from Viotal, Philodrill said in documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission that Blackgold had also expressed interest in joining the Octon block consortium.

Viotal had earlier joined the consortium developing the Galoc oil field, also in Palawan, under SC 14.

The Galoc field is estimated to contain 25 million barrels of recoverable oil reserves.

The consortium has earned \$42 million to resume drilling to take advantage of rising oil prices.

In its first quarter SEC filing, SC 14 operator Philodrill said Cape Energy and Taram Oil entered into an agreement with Viotal last March 16 to finance the proposed Galoc field development program.

Viotal committed \$9 million to the Galoc Production Co., a joint venture firm formed by Cape Oil and Taram Energy to undertake the Galoc development.

It likewise agreed to underwrite another \$20 million for additional developmental capital, Philodrill said.

"The Galoc consortium is now waiting for the final documentation process of the agreement to be completed," it added.

Viotal is currently the world's largest buyer of petroleum products from the Middle East, with sales hitting \$61 billion last year.

It is also one of the largest fuel oil suppliers to utilities in Europe and North America, as well as a world leader in the blending and distribution of gasoline.

The company has an oil refinery in Newfoundland with a capacity of 105,000 barrels a day.

It has main offices in London, Houston and Singapore, and offices in 17 other countries.

